

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7502
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 JAKARTA 3462

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EGEN, ASEAN, ID
SUBJECT: VIEWS OF ASEAN SECRETARY GENERAL ON U.S.-ASEAN RELATIONS

1. DURING MY INITIAL COURTESY CALL ON THE NEW ASEAN SECRETARY GENERAL, UMARJADI NJOTOWIJONO, ON MARCH 16 I DISCUSSED THE PROPOSED JULY U.S. - ASEAN MEETING ALONG THE SAME LINES WE HAD COVERED WITH WIDJOJO (JAKARTA 3038). UMARJADI SAID HE WAS GENERALLY FAMILIAR WITH THIS PROPOSAL AND HAD SEEN A COPY OF AMBASSADOR ASHARI'S REPORT OF HIS MEETING WITH ASSISTANT SECRETARY HOLBROOKE. UMARJADI AGREED IN PRINCIPLE THAT IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE TO HAVE THE JULY MEETING AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL. HE RECOGNIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF ASSOCIATING THE TOP LEVEL U.S. LEADERSHIP WITH THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE ASEAN REGION. HE AGREED ALSO THAT IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE FOR THE ASEAN REPRESENTATION

AT THE JULY MEETING TO BE SIMILAR TO THAT USED IN MANILA LAST SEPTEMBER (FOREIGN MINISTER ROMULO ACCOMPANIED BY ECONOMIC MINISTERS FROM THE OTHER MEMBER STATES).

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2. AT THE SAME TIME, UMARJADI STRESSED THAT CABINET LEVEL REPRESENTATIVES COULD NOT RETURN FROM A MEETING IN WASHINGTON WITH EMPTY HANDS. SOME MEMBERS OF THE ASEAN SECRETARIAT AND SOME OFFICIALS IN THE MEMBER GOVERNMENTS STILL FAVORED TALKS AT THE "OFFICIAL" LEVEL. TO OVERCOME THIS OPPOSITION AND TO ENSURE SUCCESSFUL TALKS AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL, THE MEMBER GOVERNMENTS WOULD WANT TO SEE

A CLEAR PROSPECT OF SOME FIRM RESULTS. ASKED WHAT SPECIFICALLY WOULD BE EXPECTED, UMARJADI TICKED OFF THE FOLLOWING SUGGESTIONS:

(A) TARIFF REDUCTIONS FOR ASEAN. UMARJADI SAID HE RECOGNIZED THIS WAS DIFFICULT GIVEN THE HIGH LEVELS OF UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AND THE FACT THAT ANY REDUCTIONS FOR THE ASEAN STATES WOULD PROBABLY BE APPLIED WORLDWIDE. HE DID NOT EXPECT MAJOR CONCESSIONS IN THIS AREA, BUT IF SOMETHING COULD BE WORKED OUT UNDER THE MTN FRAMEWORK BEFORE THE JULY MEETING, IT COULD POSSIBLY BE ANNOUNCED AT THAT TIME AS A RESPONSE TO REQUESTS MADE BY THE ASEAN STATES DURING THE MEETING LAST SEPTEMBER.

(B) COMMON FUND AND RELATED MATTERS. UMARJADI SAID WHILE HE HOPED FOR PROGRESS IN THIS AREA, HE RECOGNIZED THAT OUR POSITION WAS FIRM AND THAT ASEAN COULD NOT REALISTICALLY EXPECT MUCH GIVE. HE WAS INCLINED TO RULE OUT ANY MAJOR CONCESSIONS IN THIS AREA AT THE JULY MEETING.

(C) PRIVATE SECTOR ASSISTANCE. UMARJADI THOUGH THERE WOULD BE SCOPE FOR U.S. ASSISTANCE IN HELPING ASEAN INCREASE ITS EXPORTS TO THE UNITED STATES. HE MENTIONED SPECIFICALLY U.S. HELP IN ARRANGING FOR TRADE DELEGATIONS FROM ASEAN, SEMINARS AND ASSISTANCE BY THE VARIOUS WASHINGTON AGENCIES IN MAKING FIRMS IN THE ASEAN AREA MORE AWARE OF WAYS IN WHICH THEY COULD TAP THE AMERICAN MARKET.

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(D) ECONOMIC AID. UMARJADI RECOGNIZED THAT WE WOULD NOT AND COULD NOT MAKE ANY LARGE COMMITMENT ALONG THE LINES OF THAT PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED BY JAPAN. HE SAID HE WAS ALSO FAMILIAR WITH OUR CURRENT AID MANDATE TO HELP THE NEEDIEST GROUPS. THIS OBJECTIVE WAS ALSO SHARED BY THE ASEAN GOVERNMENTS. WITHIN THESE GUIDELINES HE FELT THERE WOULD BE CONSIDERABLE SCOPE FOR U.S. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IN PROJECTS HAVING A DIRECT IMPACT ON THE POORER ELEMENTS. ONE POSSIBILITY WHICH HE SAID WAS BEING EXPLORED WITHIN GOVERNMENT OF INDONESIA WAS ASSISTANCE IN THE FIELD OF FAMILY PLANNING. OTHER POSSIBILITIES WHICH HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED, BUT ON WHICH NO SPECIFIC PROGRESS HAS YET BEEN MADE, ARE IN THE AREAS OF AGRICULTURE, REFORESTATION AND PREVENTION OF EROSION.

3. UMARJADI STRESSED THAT THE BALL IS NOW WITH ASEAN. IT IS NECESSARY FOR THE ASEAN SECRETARIAT AND THE MEMBER STATES TO COORDINATE AMONG THEMSELVES AND TO COME UP WITH SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS TO WHICH WE CAN REACT DURING PRELIMINARY, LOWER LEVEL DISCUSSIONS BEFORE THE JULY MEETING. UMARJADI IMPLIED THAT HE IS RUNNING INTO DIFFICULTY WITH THE ASEAN SECRETARIAT SETUP WHICH IS USED TO A FAIRLY LEISURELY STYLE OF OPERATION AND IS ALSO HAVING SOME TROUBLE MOVING THE MEMBER GOVERNMENTS

RAPIDLY IN THIS DIRECTION. HOWEVER, ASEAN HOPES TO BE READY
TO TALK WITH US ABOUT SPECIFICS COMING OUT OF THE JULY MEETING WITHIN
THE NEXT MONTH.

4. ON A MORE GENERAL BASIS, UMARJADI SAID THAT ASEAN WELCOMED
THE RECENT MORE ACTIVE U.S. ROLE IN OPENING AN ECONOMIC DIALOGUE.
PREVIOUSLY THE U.S. HAD STOOD ASIDE, AND THIS WAS PROPER GIVEN
THE SITUATION WHICH EXISTED AT THAT TIME. NOW TIMES HAVE CHANGED
AND THE "OTHER SIDE" DID NOT CRITICIZE THE U.S. - ASEAN TALKS IN
SEPTEMBER 1977. HE WELCOMED FURTHER STRENGTHENING OF THIS
DIALOGUE IN THE ECONOMIC AREA.

5. ASKED ABOUT ASEAN PROJECTS, HE SAID CONSTRUCTION OF THE UREA
FERTILIZER PLANT IN ACEH SHOULD START SOON. JAPAN HAD INSISTED ON
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TO CONDITIONS. FIRST, THAT THIS BE OFFICIALLY IDENTIFIED AS AN
ASEAN PROJECT (THIS HAS BEEN DONE), AND CONFIRMATION BY A JAPANESE
FEASIBILITY STUDY OF THE FINDINGS OF THE EARLIER ASEAN STUDY
(THIS IS UNDER WAY). HE BELIEVES THE FINDINGS WILL BE FAVORABLE
AND THAT THE PLANT SHOULD BE IN OPERATION BY 1080 OR 1981.

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6. HOWEVER, PROBLEMS HAVE ARISEN, UMARJADI SAID, REGARDING THE DIESEL ENGINE PLANT IN SINGAPORE. THE INDONESIAN GOVERNMENT, WHICH ALREADY HAS A FACILITY TO PRODUCE THESE ENGINES, WANTED THE SINGAPORE PLANT LIMITED TO PRODUCTION OF THOSE ABOVE 500 HORSEPOWER. THIS WAS NOT REALISTIC FOR THE ASEAN AREA AS A WHOLE AND WOULD HAVE LEFT LITTLE SCOPE FOR THE SINGAPORE PLANT. IT HAS NOW BEEN DECIDED THAT INDONESIA WILL RETAIN THE RIGHT TO MANUFACTURE ENGINES UP TO 500 HORSEPOWER, PROCURING LARGER UNITS, IF ANY ARE REQUIRED, FROM THE SINGAPORE FACILITY. THE OTHER ASEAN MEMBERS WILL LIMIT THEIR OWN PRODUCTION TO 200 HORSEPOWER ENGINES AND PROCURE ALL LARGER UNITS FROM SINGAPORE.

7. ASKED ABOUT ASEAN'S RELATIONS WITH THE INDOCHINA STATES, UMARJADI SAID THAT THIS WAS IMPROVING BUT STILL HAD A LONG WAY TO GO. HE FELT IT WAS IMPORTANT TO BE RESPONSIVE TOWARD VIETNAM IN PARTICULAR IN AN EFFORT TO DRAW THAT NATION AWAY FROM THE BIG POWERS -- HE MENTIONED CHINA AND THE SOVIET UNION SPECIFICALLY -- AND SHOW HANOI THAT IT HAD OTHER OPTIONS. AT THE SAME TIME, ASEAN HAD CONSIDERED THE MATTER AND WOULD NOT CONFIDENTIAL

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AGREE TO CHANGE THE PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THE ORGANIZATION TO MEET VIETNAM'S REQUIREMENTS. HE SEEMED SKEPTICAL THAT VIETNAM WOULD ENTER INTO ANY CLOSE DIALOGUE WITH ASEAN FOR A LONG TIME TO COME, BUT DID NOTE THAT THE LEVEL OF ANTI-ASEAN RHETORIC FROM HANOI HAS LESSENED.

8. ON HIS OWN FUTURE, UMARJADI CONFIRMED THAT HE WILL LEAVE OFFICE IN MAY WHEN DHARSONO'S TERM OF OFFICE WOULD HAVE ENDED. WHILE HE IS TRYING TO RUN THE OFFICE EFFECTIVELY AND TO INJECT MORE LIFE INTO THE SECRETARIAT, HE REGARDS HIMSELF AS A SHORT-TIMER AND STILL LOOKS AT ASEAN AFFAIRS LARGELY FROM AN INDONESIAN PERSPECTIVE.
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